iSupport

cross-border recovery
of maintenance obligations
*pour le recouvrement
transfrontière des
obligations alimentaires*

iSupport Technical Meeting
**Tuesday 22 September 2015, 15h30 (The Hague time)**

Meeting Report

Participants

Arnaldo José Alves Silveira	Brazil
Sven Jensen	Estonia
Tanja Niemi /Pietari Kortekangas	Finland
Natasha Butler	France
Chiara Fioravanti	ITTIG
Robert Blukis	Latvia
Marcel Grohmann	Norway
Paulo Gonçalves / Alexandre Murgeiro	Portugal
Suneetha Ginjupalli	Protech - India
Ebi Yesunesadhas	Protech - USA
Sreegopal Vemuri	Protech - USA
Martijn Blad	The Netherlands
Lamia Spedden	United States of America

List of the components and design of the architecture

Sreegopal Vemuri (Protech) provided a description of the solution and shared the following picture:
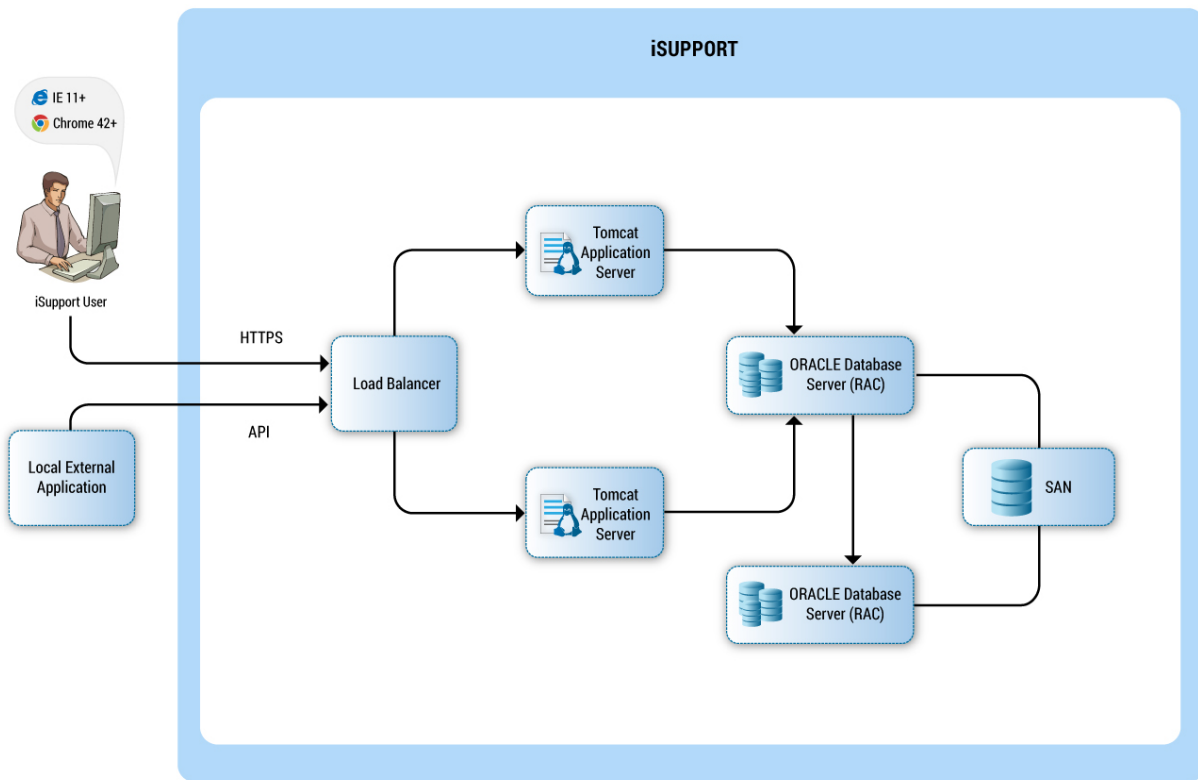
iSUPPORT

* Internet Speed DSL/TI with Good Download

iSupport is an application browser for end-user, currently supports IE 11+ and Google Chrome 42+.

This Tomcat Java Application server connects to the database. iSupport is built and tested with an Oracle database. Protech is planning to use a backup database and we recommend a SAN storage.

This is a standard application structure. Protech uses Oracle JDK 1.7.0_45

Sreegopal Vemuri also presented the configuration list with components.

- List of the components which has to be installed in the local environment.
  - Networking (LAN/WAN)
  - Security – https , login , key pair generation ← 60 day changed
  - Operating System
  - Red hat Linux   ← Red Hat Enterprise Linux Server release 6.4 for both Appserver and Database server
    - Oracle Database 12c Enterprise Edition Release 12.1.0.1.0
    - My-SQL but only script, needs adjustments which will be detailed at a later stage.
  - Application
    - iSupport ← Load Balancer & App server
    - e-CODEX
    - Browser for end-user

- IE 11+
- Google Chrome 42+
  - o Server
    - Database Physical and App Server Virtual :
      - Processors, cores: Database – 4 cores (since the license cost for Oracle is based on CPU cores, it is preferable to start with 4 and increase to 8 as case load increases.
      - App Server – 4 Cores with minimum 2 App server [Redundancy]
    - Memory and memory expandability
      - Database - 8 GB – 16 GB
      - App Server – 4 GB – 8 GB
    - OS bit version – 64 bit
    - Hard drives :
      - SAN Storage recommended for Oracle – 100 to 150 GB
      - App Severs – 100 GB

One participant (USA) asked whether a firewall was needed.

Sreegopal Vemuri indicated that he could not provide a final answer on that matter. Presumably, servers are already behind the firewall. He suggested having load balancer to distribute load between two tomcat servers.

Sreegopal Vemuri further indicated that Linux 6.4 was recommended as an operating system. This is where we have been testing the system. He explained that an Oracle supported Linux server would be required. That is to say, any OS version which is supported by Oracle. He confirmed that the database schemer will be provided as well.

A participant (France) expressed concerns about the use of Oracle and explained that her Central Authority had stated their opposition to the use of Oracle from the very beginning.

Eby Yesunesadhas (Protech) confirmed that iSupport was currently not compatible with MySQL.

Brigitte Voerman stated that this point will be discussed with Protech and participants will be informed of the outcome in the near future.

Sreegopal Vemuri then described the interface with e-CODEX. ISupport is constantly looking for messages that need to be transmitted to other States. Then iSupport writes these messages in a FTP server. E-Codex will connect to the FTP server, process messages and transmit to the other State. User can exchange information related to the case with other States through iSupport.

A participant (Finland) queried the character set used in iSupport and recommended using UTF8. He also asked whether iSupport would support only Microsoft format, or also ODF format.

Sreegopal Vemuri confirmed that UTF8 is the correct character set. AL32UTF8 character set is used with Oracle database. Further to the second question, he confirmed the usage of a standard XML format. Any browser that can read a standard XML should be able to read it and transmit it.

A participant (the Netherlands) asked whether the components and the application required would remain the same in the situation where a State would only use the Plug-in/API?

Brigitte Voerman confirmed that all iSupport components would be required to be able to exchange secure communication via e-CODEX

A participant (USA) asked whether:

- the batch would run in Chrome?
- one file/multiple files would be sent for each case?

Sreegopal Vemuri answered that the batch would be a java program, running into this tomcat application server environment, similar to chrome but not technically identical. Not at an OS level.

He then explained that multiple attachments for each case were possible. You have a message header, and an XML representing the data, plus a PDF and a Word document. Technically you have documents in apart folders for that case. We are sending batches, case by case.

Licences

Sreegopal Vemuri indicated that Oracle licenses (for States using Oracle database), and Operating System licenses were required.

Maintenance

Brigitte Voerman reminded the participants that a testing phase of the maintenance would start in May. At that time the Pilot phase will be completed, and States can go live. States using iSupport in a production environment before September, will start paying maintenance fees as of September 2016 only.

One participant (Latvia) queried the grounds of maintenance fees.

Brigitte Voerman explained that iSupport would be a free software, and maintenance costs will be shared by States that implements the system. She reminded the participants to the decision of the Advisory Board, to share costs on the basis of the UPU system (see para. 22 of Info. Doc. No 7 "Governance Issues in relation to iSupport" for the attention of the Council of March 2015 on General Affairs and Policy of the Conference, attached for ease of reference).

Share installation costs

A participant (NL) shared his concern about the installation costs. In order to face the lack of resources, he suggested combining efforts and hiring the same company for all States wishing to implement iSupport.

Another participant (Norway) explained that this option should be taken into consideration and discussed.

Brigitte Voerman concluded that a general email would be send to allow further discussions.

API (Plug-in)

Sreegopal Vemuri explained that a plug-in, also called API, would be built into iSupport to make information available for the local systems. (case data, financial information etc…). The integration would be a web service type. He stressed however the need to identify beforehand:

- the types of data that States will want to import or export through the API,
- any security requirements / identification needs.

A participant (USA) expressed her interest in using the API, and ask for additional time to provide more details on the data exchanged.

Another participant (Netherlands) expressed his interest, and explained that the external company developing the interface for the Dutch Central Authority should be in contact with the developer.

Brigitte Voerman suggested organising a specific meeting on this topic.

Participants from Finland and France indicated that they will not be using the API.

Availability of source code for Pilot States during development

Availability of source code for Pilot States will be discussed internally with Protech, and information on the outcome will be provided as soon as possible.

Testing prior to the start of the Pilot phase

Brigitte Voerman stressed the importance of having all components installed, tested and ready in each State environment at the start of the Pilot phase. She added however that e-CODEX tests would only be performed once e-CODEX has been installed in all States, in the first days of the Pilot phase.